

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

## 1. Name

historic Yacht Helianthus III

and or common Yacht Helianthus

## 2. Location

street & number Hilton Inn dock n/a not for publication

city, town Annapolis n/a vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Maryland code 24 county Anne Arundel code 003

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Eleanor B. Faithorn

street & number P. O. Box 4382

city, town Annapolis n/a vicinity of state Maryland 21402

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. U.S.C.G. Documentation Office

street & number Hampton Roads-Norfolk Federal Building

200 Granby Mall

city, town Norfolk state Virginia 23510

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Maryland Historical Trust

title Historic Sites Inventory

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1983

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

## 7. Description

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### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved date ☐ n/a

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

#### Number of Resources

##### Contributing

0  
0  
0  
1  
1

##### Noncontributing

0 buildings  
0 sites  
0 structures  
0 objects  
0 Total

#### Number of previously listed

National Register properties  
included in this nomination: 0

Original and historic functions  
and uses: residential, transportation

### DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

The yacht Helianthus III is a ketch-rigged wooden vessel, 62½ feet long on deck with a 13'9" beam and 4'6" draft, designed by Nathanael Greene Herreshoff as his personal yacht and constructed in 1921 by the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company of Bristol, Rhode Island. Her round bilge, semi-displacement hull is of double-planked construction, with Georgia pine planking over oak frames. Decks are constructed of ship-laid Oregon pine and partially fiberglassed. The cabin, containing the main salon and wheelhouse, was expanded c. 1959. Below decks are three guest cabins, storage and equipment areas, and captain's quarters. Most of the interior furnishings and hardware, as well as Herreshoff-designed running gear, are original.

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National Park Service

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The Yacht Helianthus III is a ketch-rigged wooden vessel, 62½ feet long on deck with a 13'9" beam and 4'6" draft, designed by Nathanael Greene Herreshoff as his personal yacht and constructed in 1921 by the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company of Bristol, Rhode Island. She is currently moored at the Hilton Inn dock at the foot of Main Street in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, and functions as a residence and cruising and research vessel.

Her round bilge, semi-displacement hull is of double-planked construction, with Georgia longleaf yellow pine heartwood planking over steam-bent oak frames. Decks are constructed of 1½" ship-laid Oregon pine, fiberglassed forward and canvas-covered aft. Superstructure includes a deckhouse constructed of mahogany and plywood, the forward section of which represents the original main salon and wheelhouse; the cabin was expanded aft c. 1959. The vessel was designed primarily as a motor yacht, originally powered by a gasoline engine; the sail rig was intended to add stability and auxiliary power. The present spruce main and mizzen masts were installed in 1970, and the bowsprit is a 1980 replacement. Original hardware survives throughout, including an innovative coil-spring shock absorber for the anchor chain which Herreshoff designed especially for this vessel.

The interior arrangement below decks, reading from fore to aft, consists of three guest cabins, a watertight collision bulkhead, rope locker, engine room, and captain's quarters. Eight portholes on each side light the interior; an original skylight deck box was removed by a previous owner and replaced with a hatch over a storage area. Most of the interior furnishings and hardware are original, including raised-panel cabinets with fleur-de-lis perforations.

A Perkins diesel engine, installed in 1976, and a 1977 Onan generator, replace previous gasoline-powered equipment. (The first two vessels in the Helianthus series were steam-powered; Herreshoff chose a gasoline engine for Helianthus III to avoid including an engineer on the crew.)

A marine survey carried out in 1981 noted that the vessel was in seaworthy, sound condition; maintenance recommendations recommended in that survey have since been executed. The survey further noted that the addition of the present Ketch rig and expanded cabin did not detract from the physical integrity of the boat.

## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) yacht design

Specific dates      1920-1921      Builder/Architect      Nathanael Greene Herreshoff

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: B, C

Criteria Exceptions: none

Level of Significance for Evaluation: national

### SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

Helianthus III is significant for its association with Nathanael Greene Herreshoff (1848-1938), one of the most renowned designers in the history of yachting in America. "Captain Nat" is perhaps best known as the designer of the yachts that defended the America's Cup six times from 1893 to 1920. He also introduced numerous innovations in wooden and metal boat construction, hardware, and rigging which remain the standard of the industry today. Helianthus III was designed by Herreshoff as his personal yacht, and built in 1921 by the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company. He cruised Bristol to Florida aboard her during the winters of 1921-1924, after which he gave up cruising. Helianthus III was Herreshoff's last yacht.

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Anne Arundel County, MD

HISTORY AND SUPPORT:

Nathanael Greene (Captain Nat) Herreshoff was born in Bristol, Rhode Island on the Narragansett Bay in 1848. By the age of 10 he had built and raced his own winning sailing craft. At 18, he entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to study engineering, and in 1878 he went into partnership with his older brother, John B., who was already operating a small boat yard. The brothers united to form the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company, with John serving as manager and Nat as chief designer.

Nat exercised creative control over all aspects of design and construction, including hulls, sails, engines, and hardware. He introduced numerous innovations in construction, rigging, and hardware, many of which are still in use today. Most of the present methods of constructing light wooden hulls were developed by Herreshoff, who also invented the web-frame system for metal vessels. Modern lightweight hollow steel spars, with scientific rigging incorporating sliding sail tracks, and the crosscut method of sail construction, were originated by "the wizard of Bristol" in the process of developing racing yachts around the turn of the 20th century. His cleats, winches, non-fouling anchors, and propellers set new standards for the marine hardware industry. He designed lightweight steam engines which enabled HMC to produce the first U.S. Navy torpedo boats as well as fast, steam-powered motor yachts.

Herreshoff is perhaps best known, however, as the designer of a series of five successful America's Cup defenders between 1893 and 1920. These sloops, all constructed by HMC, included Vigilante (1893), Defender (1895), Columbia (1899, 1901), Reliance (1903), and Resolute (built 1913, defended the Cup in 1920).

Helianthus III is the last in a series of motor yachts designed by Herreshoff for his personal use, and constructed by Herreshoff Manufacturing Company. Helianthus I and II no longer exist. Helianthus III was built in 1921, and used by Herreshoff to cruise from Bristol to Florida in the winters of 1921, 1923, and 1924. Herreshoff gave up cruising in 1924, at the age of 76, and sold Helianthus III. She was the last of Herreshoff's personal yachts.

The yacht passed through a succession of owners between 1926 and 1962. In 1959, she was acquired by Charles Gulden (of Gulden's mustard fame), who was responsible for the additions to the cabin. Since 1962, she has been owned and used by Eleanor R. Faithorn for cruising the Atlantic coast and performing marine research.

The original carved model from which the construction plans for HELIANTHUS were taken is in the Herreshoff Museum in Bristol, Rhode Island. The construction plans along with complete detail drawings and specifications are preserved in the Nautical Museum of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Current detailed technical drawings and descriptions are on file in the Marine Safety Office of the United States Coast Guard in Baltimore, Maryland, and Documentation records in the in the USCG Documentation Office in Norfolk, Virginia.



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet No. 3

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property n/a

Quadrangle name Annapolis, Maryland

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	8	3	7	0	3	3	0	4	3	1	4	8	9	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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G 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The Helianthus III is moored for most of the year at the Hilton Inn dock, Annapolis, Maryland. The historic boundaries of this movable vessel are co-terminous with the hull.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter E. Kurtze, Assistant National Register Administrator

organization Maryland Historical Trust date December 1983

street & number 21 State Circle telephone 301-269-2438

city or town Baltimore state Maryland 21401

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☒ national ☐ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

*[Signature]*

6-27-84

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Carter, Samuel III. "The Herreshoff Story"  
Yankee, June 1964, pp. 64-69, 109-113.

"The Leonardo of Early Yachting" in The Classic Boat (Alexandria, Va.: Time-  
Life Books, 1977) pp. 66-77.

Herreshoff, L. Francis. Capt. Nat Herreshoff: The Wizard of Bristol. (New  
York: Sheridan House, N.D.).

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Verbal Boundary Description/Justification

The boundaries of the nominated object correspond to its exterior dimensions:  
the vessel is 62½ feet long on deck and has a beam of 13 feet, 9 inches. The  
boat is permanently moored at the Hilton Inn Dock, Annapolis, Maryland.

3662 11 SE  
(ROUND BAY)

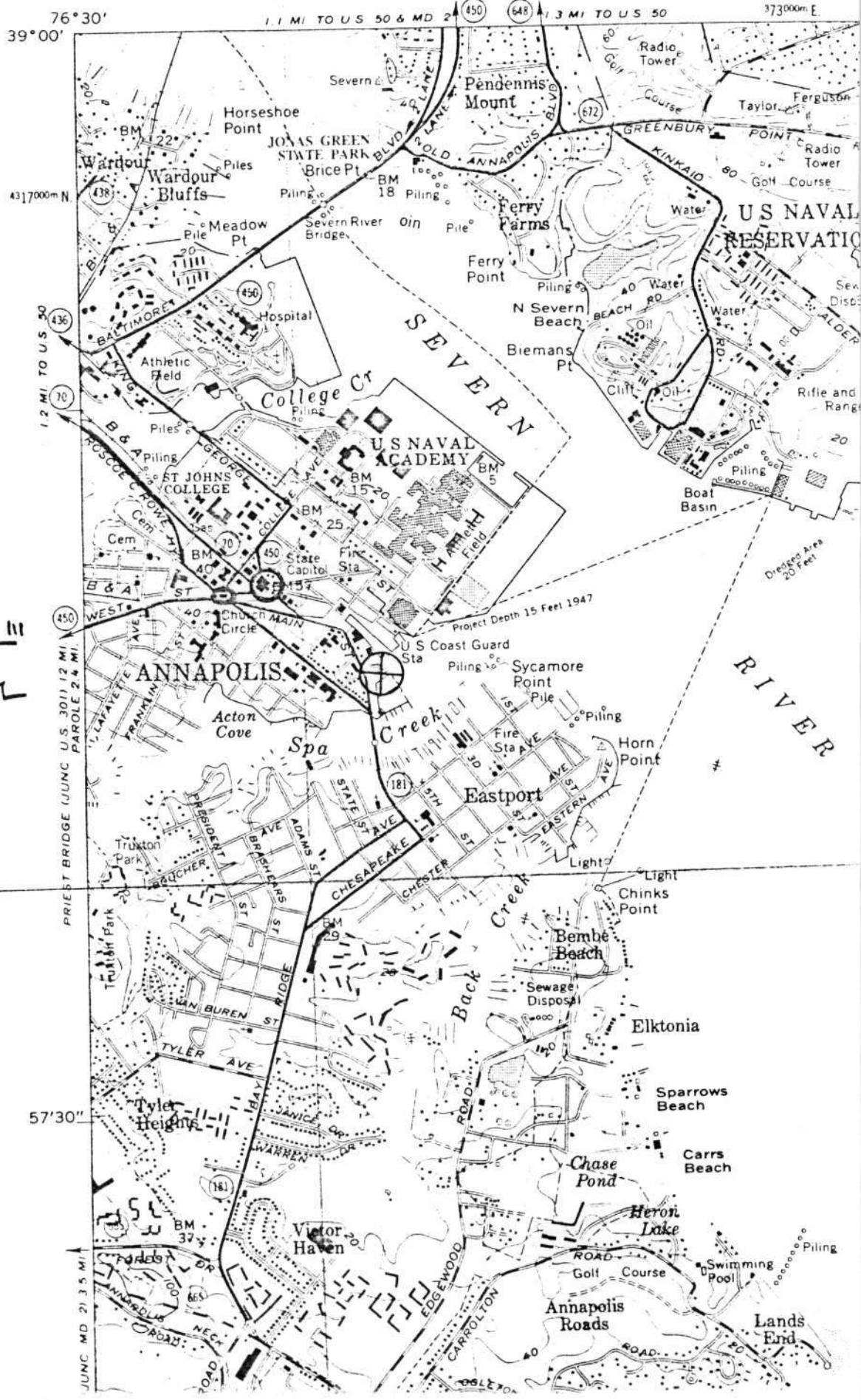
UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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YACHT  
HELIANTHUS III

ANNE ARUNDEL  
COUNTY,  
MARYLAND

18-370330 -  
4314890







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HELIANTUS

At her mooring  
Annapolis Md.



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HELIANTUS (III)

Designed by Nathaniel Green Henshoff

Built 1921 Bristol RI.

Henshoff Manufacturing Co





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Helianthus foredeck 1983

showing the original shock  
absorber - non fouling  
anchored a large capstan  
as designed by D.G. Henshoff



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HELIANTHUS III

Detail showing section  
of original galley -



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HELIANTHUS III

Detail of companion way  
showing original panelling  
& fleus de lis motive  
used by Nq Herreshoff for  
decorative & venting purposes





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HELIANTHUS  
III

Detail of companion way,  
showing original panelling  
i fleurs de lis motif  
used by N.G.H. for decorative venting



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## HELIANTUS III

Detail of foreward stateroom  
Showing design motive  
Used by N.G. Herreshoff  
for venting purposes  
also original hardware





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HELIANTHUS III

Original wheel house  
main salon -  
Photo shows chart table  
dining table etc.



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# HELIANTHUS

White area is original wheel house & main salon.

Grey area aft was originally open deck.